

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 22

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding housing affordability and urging fair and expeditious review by international trade tribunals to ensure a competitive North American market for softwood lumber.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 13, 2003

Mr. NICKLES (for himself, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. KYL, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. REED, and Mr. ROBERTS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding housing affordability and urging fair and expeditious review by international trade tribunals to ensure a competitive North American market for softwood lumber.

Whereas the United States and Canada have, since 1989, worked to eliminate tariff and nontariff barriers to trade;

Whereas free trade has greatly benefitted the United States and Canadian economies;

Whereas the U.S. International Trade Commission only found the potential for a Threat of Injury (as opposed to actual injury) to domestic lumber producers but the Department of Commerce imposed a 27 percent duty on U.S. lumber consumers;

Whereas trade restrictions on Canadian lumber exported to the U.S. market have been an exception to the general rule of bilateral free trade;

Whereas the legitimate interests of consumers are often overlooked in trade disputes;

Whereas the availability of affordable housing is important to American home buyers and the need for the availability of such housing, particularly in metropolitan cities across America, is growing faster than it can be met;

Whereas imposition of special duties on U.S. consumers of softwood lumber, essential for construction of on-site and manufactured homes, jeopardizes housing affordability;

Whereas the United States has agreed to abide by dispute settlement procedures in the World Trade Organization and the North American Free Trade Agreement, providing for international review of national remedy actions; and,

Whereas the World Trade Organization and North American Free Trade Agreement dispute panels are reviewing findings by the ITC: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the Department of Commerce and U.S. Trade Representative should work to assure that no delays occur in resolving the current disputes before the NAFTA and WTO panels, supporting a fair and expeditious review;

(2) U.S. anti-dumping and countervail law is a rules-based system that should proceed to conclusion in WTO and NAFTA trade panels;

(3) the President should continue discussions with the Government of Canada to promote open trade between the United States and Canada on softwood lumber free of trade restraints that harm consumers; and

(4) the President should consult with all stakeholders, including consumers of lumber products in future discussions regarding any terms of trade in softwood lumber between the United States and Canada.

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